

P-405, P-414, P-421/CP-86-547DENYING PETITION AND REQUIRING PROMOTION OF
OPTIONAL TOLL DISCOUNT PLANS

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Barbara Beerhalter	Chair
Cynthia A. Kitlinski	Commissioner
Norma McKanna	Commissioner
Robert J. O'Keefe	Commissioner
Darrel L. Peterson	Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for Extended Area
Service from Janesville to Mankato and
Waseca

ISSUE DATE: January 11, 1989

DOCKET NO. P-405, P-414, P-421/CP-86-
547

ORDER DENYING PETITION AND
REQUIRING PROMOTION OF OPTIONAL
TOLL DISCOUNT PLANS

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On September 15, 1986 telephone subscribers in Janesville, Minnesota filed a petition under Minn. Rules, part 7815.0700, requesting the establishment of two Extended Area Service (EAS) routes, one between Janesville and Mankato and one between Janesville and Waseca. The petition affected three telephone companies: Central Telephone Company (Centel), which serves Janesville; Northwestern Bell Telephone Company (Northwestern Bell), which serves Waseca; and Mankato Citizens Telephone Company, which serves Mankato.

On December 12, 1986 the Commission issued an Order extending the time for filing the traffic studies, proposed rates, and stipulation of facts required by Minn. Rules, parts 7815.0800 through 7815.1000. These documents were filed in accordance with the time frames established in that Order.

The matter came before the Commission on December 20, 1988.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the stipulation of facts presented herein the Commission finds that the public interest does not require Extended Area Service between Janesville and Mankato or between Janesville and Waseca. Although Janesville residents have extensive contacts with Mankato and Waseca, they have local access to essential services, and they do not have a community of interest with the residents of those cities.

Police and fire protection are provided locally and can be summoned by a local call. Medical care is available within the local exchange area. The local public schools are located in Janesville, as are two parochial schools serving children through the eighth grade.

Furthermore, the traffic studies conducted by the companies show that the number of Janesville subscribers calling Waseca and Mankato is much higher than the number of Waseca and Mankato subscribers calling Janesville. For example, Janesville subscribers average approximately 6.7 calls per line per month to Mankato, while Mankato subscribers average 0.3 calls per line per month to Janesville. This militates against finding that the residents of Mankato and Waseca share a community of interest with Janesville, and suggests that it would be inequitable to apportion the costs of the proposed EAS routes equally. Unfortunately, any other apportionment would make the routes prohibitively expensive.

The Commission realizes that many Janesville residents have a need for some form of discounted interexchange toll service. Most Janesville residents in the work force do commute to Mankato or Waseca, and the entertainment and shopping facilities of these communities are used by Janesville residents. To date, only one of the two major alternatives to EAS, the Circle Calling Rate Break, has been available in Janesville, and it has not been heavily marketed there.

As a result of this proceeding, however, Northwestern Bell and Centel have agreed to make the other major alternative to EAS, the Community Calling Plan, available as well, and to do so without requiring the petition procedure of Minn. Rules, part 7815.0300. These two discount plans can provide substantial toll relief to Janesville residents and should be promoted as widely as possible. The Commission will therefore require Centel to include information on these plans with its next two monthly billings and to waive its nonrecurring service charge for customers who request either service during this promotional period.

Finally, Commission policy on Extended Area Service and toll discount plans is still evolving. The Commission assures Janesville subscribers that if, within the next two years, the criteria for granting EAS change, or if other EAS options become available, the Commission will waive the two-year waiting period between EAS petitions imposed by Minn. Rules, part 7815.1500.

ORDER

1. The petition for Extended Area Service from Janesville to Mankato and Waseca, filed September 15, 1986, is hereby denied.
2. Central Telephone Company shall provide with its next two monthly billings to Janesville subscribers information about the Community Calling Plan and the Circle Calling Rate Break.
3. Central Telephone Company shall waive its nonrecurring service change fee for subscribers who request the Community Calling Plan or the Circle Calling Rate Break from the date of this Order until 30 days after the last promotional mailing required under paragraph 2.
4. Within 20 days of the date of this Order, Central Telephone Company shall file updated tariff pages indicating that the Community Calling Plan is available in the Janesville exchange.
5. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Mary Ellen Hennen
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)